

**Iowa Status**

common; native

Iowa Range

statewide

Bibliography

Iowa Department of Natural Resources. 2001.
Biodiversity of Iowa: Aquatic Habitats CD-ROM.

earthworm

representative species

Kingdom: Animalia
Division/Phylum: Annelida
Class: Oligochaeta

Features

Earthworms have a segmented body. The rows of setae (bristles) present on the ventral (belly) side help them move through soil. They have a true body cavity.

Natural History

Some earthworms burrow in mud or soil while others are aquatic. They eat dead organisms, particularly plants, which they ingest with soil as they burrow. Earthworms are nocturnal. They live in burrows made by muscular contractions. They are hermaphrodites, producing both eggs and sperm, but at different times. During mating, two individuals exchange sperm. The eggs are deposited in the soil in a cocoon.

Habitats

Mississippi River; Missouri River; interior rivers and streams; natural lakes and prairie marshes; wet prairies and fens; bottomland forests; constructed lakes, ponds, and reservoirs; temporary water supplies